

HELPER (UTAH) [486]

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MINUTES, 1911#

DESCRIPTION: These reels record the actions of the Helper city council. Helper Town, established in 1907, soon became a third class city on October 9, 1915 with the mayor leading the city council. The council was authorized to manage all city business. This includes budgeting; constructing sewage and electric systems; establishing city ordinances which include those related to liquor sales and licensing, autos, drunk driving, water use, animal control, garbage disposal, road construction, radio interference, restaurant licensing, business regulation; establishing resolutions concerning the application to the County Commission to build a hospital, the prohibition of public meetings due to labor unrest, the construction of a city auditorium, the maintenance of a city library, the construction of a plant to test coal for synthetic fuels; heading city committees such as police department, fire department, parks and cemeteries; and hiring and establishing salaries for city employees. All of these activities are noted in the minutes. The day's entries are prefaced by the date, names of those present, and where and when they met.

The Council was authorized to manage all city business. This included auditing all claims against the city and payments by the treasurer. Bids received, and bills and wages paid in conjunction with the activities are noted. They levied property taxes and could call for bond elections. Bond elections were called for the construction of the power plant in 1912, the waterworks plant in 1925, and the civic auditorium in 1936. Activities surrounding each of these constitute a major portion of the minutes.

In 1907, the Helper Town board had organized committees such as Claims and Accounts, Fire and Water, Licenses, City Property-Streets and Alleys, Laws and Ordinances, Sanitation and Health, Finance and Auditing, and Lighting prior to city status. In March 1912, the city council passed a resolution to construct an electric plant. In 1913 they subdivided the city for electricity and established charges. The Electric Lights and Buildings committee was established in 1918. The city committees eventually evolved into separate departments for

Public Safety, Water Department, Street Department, Electric Department, Park Department, and Building Department.

On May 19#20, 1919 a fire destroyed numerous buildings and Helper required the help of the Price Fire Department. This instigated numerous measures to protect the city. The next month, a motion was passed to purchase a fire hose, cart, nozzles, and later to purchase a fire truck. Along with increasing the number of firemen, the fire committee made plans for effective fire protection.

The city council promoted public health. They created ordinances regarding animal control and rabies, garbage and the infestation of flies, driving under the influence of alcohol, and speed controls within city limits. Specific actions or ordinances were taken in the 1930s concerning labor unrest. In 1933 the council declared a state of emergency and prohibited the public gathering of more than three persons. There soon followed a resolution against "labor leaders" that were creating unrest.

The minutes also record actions concerning city property rights. The largest concerns dealt with the Denver Rio Grande RailRoad in regard to electricity, placement of electric and telephone poles, water rights, waste disposal, condemned railroad property along Main Street, and sewer maintenance.

Responsibilities noted in the minutes include the supervision of all city officials and employees. All personnel actions are recorded, by individual name, and include appointments, wages (figures were included in an annual budget although the record is not consistent), resignations, and terminations. This includes everyone from the lifeguards for the city pool to the plant engineers.

Helper businesses were required to obtain licenses from the city council. The minutes record petitions for licenses for rooming houses, beauty operators, and especially liquor. The minutes only record the official motions and there is no further record here regarding licensing.

Council members chose election officers to oversee the election process in designated areas. The minutes contain a list of candidates and the election returns for the offices of mayor, 4 year councilman, 2 year councilman, treasurer, and city recorder. However, the record is not consistent; after 1943, the minutes stopped recording complete election returns.

ARRANGEMENT: The series is arranged chronologically by date of meeting. However, filming affects how that arrangement appears here (see RESEARCH NOTE).

RESEARCH NOTE: Filming on reel 1 proceeds in chronological order. Reels 2 through 4 were filmed in reverse order by date (with a few exceptions: 1922, 1963, 1964 are chronological). It may be easiest for the researcher to proceed directly to the end of a given reel and then read the entries while rewinding.

PROCESSING NOTE: Processed by M. Call in 1998.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description
1	1911#1912
2	1925#1912
3	1926#1949
4	1966#1948